

**Description:** This is a fairly moderate 8.3 mile circuit hike. If it weren't for a few long, gradual hills, especially the one at the end, this hike might be classified as easy. It features 3 pastoral views of the surrounding farmland. All stream crossings, even the smallest, are accomplished via foot bridges.

King's Gap Environmental Education Center is located on 1,450 acres of forest along the northern border of the Michaux Forest. For this reason I describe it as a hike in that forest. In my estimation, the trail system is under-utilized year round. Although the short nature trails close to the center of this facility might get a lot of use the same cannot be said of the "boundary" trails. I've hiked there 3 times over the last 2 years and have seen only 4 other hikers total. Two of them were less than 1 mile from the parking lot.

King's Gap is a great place to visit when the days are short and/or when you wish to introduce others who are in reasonably good shape to the hiking experience.

**Directions from US 15 north of Gettysburg, PA:**

1. Take Exit PA-94 North or West (?) toward Carlisle/York Springs
2. Bear right onto PA 34 at Mount Holly Springs.
3. AFTER driving through Mount Holly Springs, Turn left onto Pine Road. DO NOT TURN LEFT ON PINE STREET IN HOLLY SPRINGS!!!!
4. Turn Left on King's Gap Road. Drive to the top of the hill and follow the circular drive. The visitor center is in the middle of the circle (New one story building, NOT the mansion.)

**Trail Notes:** All trails are blazed and signed at intersections. The colors on the map shown here coincide with those on the trail. I am not sure if the Pond Tr (not used in this loop) is blazed.

From the visitor's center walk over to the Mansion. The hike starts at the kiosk to its left but you might want to check out the view from the mansion's rear veranda before you start.

From the kiosk follow the red blazed Rock Scree Trail. Cross the park road, 2 intersections of green blazed Forest Heritage Trail and the east junction with the purple blazed Ridge Overlook Trail. Stay on Red blazed Rock Scree Trail. At 0.69 miles from the beginning arrive at the west junction of purple blazed Ridge Overlook Trail. Turn right onto the Overlook trail and climb to a rock formation about 0.3 miles from the trail junction. Signs indicate the overlook.

Proceed another 0.3 miles to the east junction of the Rock Scree Trail heading back towards the mansion. In a few steps turn left onto green blazed Forest Heritage Trail.

In 0.4 miles come to the junction with yellow blazed Maple Hollow Trail. Follow the Maple Hollow Trail, descending at first but then climbing to the intersection with orange blazed Scenic Vista Trail. Following the blazed swath to the right takes you back to the center of the park. Proceed across the swath to pick up the footpath (I call this a zig-zag intersection.).

**At 0.54 miles from the swath arrive at a scenic overlook of the gap complete with benches, a great lunch spot. After lunch, continue along the Scenic Vista Trail and in 1.0 miles from the overlook descend to a picnic area and covered amphitheatre. There are rest rooms here.**

**Cross a driveway to a kiosk and follow the purple blazed Water Shed Trail. The trail will go downhill until it comes to a stream and then turn upstream. The trail then splits (It actually is in itself a small loop trail.). To complete the entire length of the circuit as described take the left fork. To shorten the hike a little bear right.**

**At the top of the Water Shed Loop Trail come to green blazed Boundary Trail. Follow the green blazes past 2 junctions of orange blazed Locust Point Trail on the right.**

**At 0.22 miles from the last Locust Pt Tr junction cross the park entrance drive and come to yellow blazed King's Gap Hollow Trail. Cross the stream on a footbridge. Turn right and follow the yellow blazes back to the starting point (1.44 miles). You'll pass the eastern terminus of purple blazed Ridge Overlook Trail on your left and cross the park drive again before the final climb.**